

influence of focal sepsis, especially in the nasal sinuses, on mental health. In his experience vascular changes, of a kind to be ascribed to the absorption of toxins, are important factors in the causation of mental disorder. He takes the view that pathological changes can always be found in the mental patient post mortem, and usually during life, and that the mental illness itself was caused by these changes. Thus he regards manic-depressive psychoses as being caused by multiple local ischaemic foci in the brain; post mortem he has found changes in the alimentary mucosa and in the mesenteric glands suggesting the absorption of toxic products, and, suggesting their effects, minute scars in brain, liver, and kidneys.

The focal-sepsis theory of mental pathology has been repeatedly criticized in the past, and the author is no doubt aware that his views run counter to the general consensus of opinion to-day, according to which other causes than those he mentions have to be ranked high in importance. One must regret, therefore, that he has not taken the opportunity of discussing the case against as well as for the views he holds. The psychiatric approach to problems of aetiology is much subject to changes of fashion, and it may well be that the climate of opinion of the future will be less hostile to his standpoint than it is now.

ELIOT SLATER.

MEASUREMENT AND PERSONALITY

The Scientific Study of Personality. By H. J. Eysenck, Ph.D. (Pp. 320; 30 illustrations. £1 10s.) London: Routledge and Kegan Paul. 1952.

It is not generally realized, even among scientists and doctors, that human personality can be and is being measured by modern experimental psychologists. Our understanding of one another in daily life, and the diagnoses of mental patients and neurotics by psychiatrists and psychoanalysts, are still a matter of art rather than science, of intuition rather than fact. Many conflicting theories of mental structure are put forward—for example, by Freudians and Jungians—and there is little or no proof of the effectiveness of the various methods of treatment adopted. Dr. Eysenck has collected the reported results of a large number of follow-up studies of patients and finds that there is actually no difference in the recovery rates of those treated by psycho-analysis, by other psychotherapeutic techniques, and those who merely go to hospital or who are advised by their own doctors without any formal treatment at all. He admits the difficulties of obtaining strictly comparable figures and the dangers of generalizing from this finding, but insists that objective, quantitative investigations of psychiatric problems are essential.

At the Maudsley Hospital Institute of Psychiatry he and his colleagues have gone a long way towards measuring, not every aspect of personality, but some of the main "dimensions," such as degrees of neuroticism, extraversion versus introversion, and psychotic tendencies. This is done by applying a long series of tests whose scoring is quite independent of any subjective judgment. The book gives a clear and well-illustrated account of such tests and of the results that have been reached with them—for example, studies of the personality changes following leucotomy operations, of the employability of mentally defective youths, of the selection of suitable student nurses, and of the importance of the hereditary factor in mental breakdown. Unfortunately it is highly technical, and much of it will not be understood without considerable psychological and statistical training. It is also somewhat unnecessarily polemical; it may irritate some of those who would benefit most from studying it. However, Dr. Eysenck has made a very strong case for strictly scientific investigations of personality, normal and abnormal, and he believes that advances can be made only through the collaboration and mutual understanding of psychiatrists and experimental psychologists.

P. E. VERNON.

EDUCATION BY FILMS

The Film in Education. By Andrew Buchanan, D.Litt., Ph.D., F.R.S.A. Introduction by J. A. Harrison, Ph.D. (Pp. 256; illustrated. £1 5s.) London: Phoenix House, Ltd. 1951.

This book represents an enthusiastic attempt to explain the wide use, both actual and potential, of films in education at all levels. This is obviously a tremendous task, and, although the extensive experience of the author permeates the text, frequent recourse to reported evidence results in a disjointed exposition. There can be little doubt that the net has been flung far too wide for this book to be useful for reference, but it is readable and contains innumerable allusions to books, meetings, and organizations dealing with film. There are, however, some inaccuracies and outdated facts.

The author likens the educational film to a visual textbook and stresses its particular use in presenting "background" or marginal subjects, a facet which has been largely overlooked in medicine. From this viewpoint the book itself is similarly styled, and it provides an interesting account of the intense and varied activities surrounding this medium at the present time.

The section on presentation or projection is perhaps out of place and should be the subject of another book, but it makes interesting reading. Remarking on the variable quality of projection in public cinemas, Dr. Buchanan points out that it is very revealing to view the same copy of a film in several theatres, and, further, that the average cinema-goer inevitably blames the film and its makers for any apparent defects. How much more forceful is this argument when it is applied to the improvised conditions of medical-classroom projection. If but a few of the principles outlined in this book were absorbed and observed, a better understanding and use of medical films might result.

PETER HANSELL.

SPANISH DICTIONARY

Spanish-English Chemical and Medical Dictionary. By Morris Goldberg. (Pp. 609. £7 9s.) New York and London: McGraw-Hill Publishing Company. 1952.

The historian F. H. Garrison said that the beautiful language of Spain is a social rather than a scientific medium. This statement is too sweeping, for both Spain and Spanish America have produced outstanding medical scientists. Moreover, Spanish is now second only to English as a medical language; in 1947 one-fifth of the journals indexed in the *Index Medicus* were in Spanish. We must not of course confuse quantity with quality, but the rapid modernization of South America suggests that Spanish will become increasingly desirable as a third foreign language for readers of French and German.

This handsome book is complementary to the author's *English-Spanish Chemical and Medical Dictionary*, published in 1947. It contains some 33,000 Spanish words, each defined in two or three lines, and encyclopaedic detail is avoided. The words are drawn from the wide field of the medical and allied sciences. The definitions were made after reference to many English and Spanish dictionaries, textbooks, and periodicals. A list of these sources guarantees the accurate reflection of current usage.

The dictionary was completed by the author's widow, Bessie L. Goldberg. Perhaps with the price in mind, she expresses the hope that with the earlier work it may be useful in reference libraries. These may well be the main buyers, for few individuals could afford so dear a book. Those who must forgo it can console themselves with the fact that a technical dictionary is a luxury. Technical terms are the least of a translator's problems; it is ordinary words and idioms that give most trouble, and help with these can be got from grammars and non-technical dictionaries, which are relatively cheap.

RAYMOND WHITEHEAD.